

the Palestinian Authority; and former Senator Bob Dole. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks to Seniors in Albuquerque, New Mexico

March 22, 2005

The President. Listen, thank you all for letting the Senator and I come by. We're thrilled to be—I'm thrilled to be back in New Mexico. You know, it's right across the border from right where I was raised. But I'm here today to talk about Social Security. I know it's of concern to you; it's of concern to me as well.

My message to people that are getting their Social Security check is pretty simple, and it's this: The Government is going to keep its promise. You don't have to worry about it. I know there are some conflicting messages out there, but it's just not the truth. The truth is you're going to get your checks. The question is whether or not your grandchildren are going to get their checks. [Laughter] And that's what the Senator and I are here to talk about, because we want to make sure that not only is the safety net solid for you but that there is a safety net for your children.

People oftentimes ask me, did Franklin Roosevelt did the right thing with Social Security? And my answer is, absolutely. My predecessor, Franklin Roosevelt, did the right thing in setting up the Social Security system. And now we've got to make sure the Social Security system works for generations. And that's why we're in town—that's why I'm in town; Pete is in town because he lives here. [Laughter]

But thanks for letting us come by. It's great to see you.

Audience member. It's great to see you.

The President. How were the eggs?

Audience member. Marvelous.

Audience member. We have the best cook.

The President. Good.

Senator Pete V. Domenici. We don't get to eat, Mr. President.

The President. No, that's right; we've got to go work. [Laughter]

Audience member. Can I shake your hand?

The President. Yes sir, you can. Thanks for letting us come by.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:18 a.m. at the Bear Canyon Senior Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Discussion on Strengthening Social Security in Albuquerque

March 22, 2005

The President. Thank you, Pete. Thanks for allowing me back in the State. It is very gracious of the people of New Mexico to not only let in a Texan—[laughter]—but to let in somebody from Arizona as well—[laughter]—and from California, I might add.

Listen, thanks, Pete. I appreciate your leadership. Pete, as you know, is a class act. He is a—he loves New Mexico, and he loves our country. We spent a lot of time talking about energy this morning. He and I are deeply concerned about the price of gasoline. We are worried about the trends taking place. We understand that we need to work with Congress to get a bill out that will encourage conservation, encourage alternative sources of energy, encourage research and development to help us use energy in wiser ways; a bill to modernize the electricity grid; a bill to encourage environmentally friendly exploration; all aimed at making America more economically secure and less dependent on foreign sources of energy. And I want to thank you for your leadership, Pete. Thanks for your leadership on the issue.

I'm proud to be here with John—John McCain. We traveled yesterday in Arizona and then Colorado and here in New Mexico. He's fixing to go back home, as am I to Texas. But the reason why I'm so pleased that John came—and you'll—we'll talk to him in a minute—is because he, like Pete, understands now is the time to get something done on the big issue of Social Security.

I'm also pleased he's here because John has been one of the true stalwarts in understanding what I call the freedom agenda. For